



**United Nations Environment Programme
Committee of Permanent Representatives
153rd Meeting**

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**Remarks by Brazil on item 5
Preparations for the commemoration of the
50th anniversary of the creation of UNEP**

as delivered by Mr. Patrick Luna,
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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor. Brazil takes this opportunity to appreciate the effort clearly undertaken by the Secretariat in the preparation of a draft strategic plan for UNEP@50. As stated by Malawi on behalf of the G77+China, this document does provide more substance about the Secretariat's proposals on many aspects of this commemoration, answering the calls for additional information made by several delegations within the CPR.

Brazil notes that the draft action plan seems to have been conceived under the assumption that a high-level meeting on Stockholm+50 would take place. It states, for example, that UNEP@50 and this possible event are to be mutually reinforcing and it suggests that the UNEP@50 event to be held in Nairobi take place in conjunction with the resumed session of UNEA-5, as if disregarding the possibility of convening the Nairobi event on the actual anniversary. Considering the time already lapsed since the offer for a Stockholm event was made, the preparation for UNEP@50 - which is a mandate from UNEA-5 - should not be constrained by what remains as an offer and has not been tabled for the consideration of the entire membership.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil welcomes the emphasis placed by the draft strategy on the science-policy interface, which is a foundational mandate - and regrettably an underfunded one. Hopefully, the increased attention to this aspect of UNEP's activities will translate into increased financial resources, both from budgetary and extrabudgetary sources.

Brazil thanks for the information on the preparation of a UNEP Global Assessments Synthesis Report, including the presentations just made. The draft strategic plan affirms that this report stems from "a request made by Member States in Resolution 4/23, paragraph 7". Through that paragraph, the Assembly requested the Executive Director to prepare a proposal for science-policy input on the global environment, *in consultation with Member States*. If this report is meant as the delivery of this mandate, we would appreciate being informed on how these consultations will take place. If this report is not meant as the delivery of this mandate, we would like to obtain additional information regarding its mandate.

Also, I should note that the slides just used by the Secretariat when attempting to address the mandate, in spite of resorting to quotes, unfortunately misquotes Resolution 4/23. While the slides affirms that a reference was made to Stockholm+50, no such reference exist in that text, which alludes solely to UNEP@50.

Mr. Chairman,

UNEP@50 should be a forward-looking process. Of course, we should seize the opportunity to take stock of all that was done over the past fifty years, and the proposed media campaigns on environmental success stories will undoubtedly contribute to this end. But the commemoration should also, and more importantly, encourage a reflection on how to strengthen our Programme so that it can, towards the future, perform even better on all its mandates. As Brazil undertakes this reflection, it emerges clearly for us that while much has been achieved under the normative angle, there is significant room for improvement under the implementation one.

The discussions culminating in Resolution 73/333 revealed that the most pressing gap we are to address in international environmental law and governance is not a normative one, but rather an operational one. It is not that we lack norms; we lack implementation of those we already have. "The UNEP we want" will be better positioned in terms of capacity, technology and resources to assist upon request developing countries to implement the commitments that they sovereignly agreed on, with a view to "leapfrogging" towards sustainable development.

As it proposes key messages for the communication strategy of UNEP@50, the draft strategy seems to overlook the issue of implementation. Paragraphs 13 and 14 address issues such as scientific progress, policy-making and effective multilateral institutions. All

of those are needed, of course, but the potential of none of them will be fully unlocked until all countries have access to the adequate means to translate them into reality.

Bridging the implementation gap is at the core of the process mandated by Resolution 73/333. For this reason, Brazil considers favorably the suggestion to seize UNEP@50 as venue for the adoption of the political declaration mandated by the General Assembly. It will ultimately be for the General Assembly to decide on this issue, at a time when it can count with a more complete understanding of all high level events envisaged for 2022.

Mr. Chairman,

We were invited to share our views on the brand identity proposed for UNEP@50, which also affords us an opportunity to comment more broadly on the communication strategy developed by UNEP. At times, it seems to be drifting away from concepts and frameworks of ideas that Member States have agreed upon. We need to reach beyond government to produce change in the scale we need, and engaging with the public requires a style that captures the attention and appeals to the imagination. The problem is that, oftentimes, the communication materials have not translated into layman vocabulary the entirety of the message that we, as Member States, agreed to convey. Ultimately, this creates or reinforces distortions and misperceptions regarding our work at UNEP.

In previous occasions, for instance, my delegation noted that resorting to Act #ForNature drifts away from the agreement reached on the theme that clearly spells that we are under a sustainable development framework. It can fuel an unwarranted adversarial perspective between human life and the rest of the natural environment, departing from Principle 1 of the 1992 Rio Declaration, according to which human beings are at the center of the concerns for sustainable development.

In a way, the proposed brand identity for UNEP@50 seems to be going in the same direction. Take the original logo of UNEP, which was used even before its creation at the 1972 Stockholm Conference: the drawing of a human figure with open arms in the center of a globe embodies the careful balance between concerns with people and planet, between conservation and sustainable use; the very balance that unlocked the possibility of the breakthrough first conference on the human environment. It points towards cooperation and openness. In contrast, the proposed logo for UNEP@50 foregoes the human element, focusing solely on the planet. Our consolation lies in the understanding that the proposed visual identity is not envisaged as a substitute, but as an "add on", to the regular UNEP logo and is not to be used separately from it.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman,

Let me now turn to the issue of the "kick-off" of the commemorations at UNEA-5. While there is a convergence on launching UNEP@50 at that occasion, delegations still need to address open loops on the road to 2022. The draft strategic plan suggests a

"culmination" event in the context of the resumed session of UNEA-5 and a "conclusion" on 5th June 2022. Broadly, this seems an interesting approach, and we would welcome more thought and further consultations on what exactly the conclusion part of the process would entail, especially considering the centrality of Nairobi as headquarters and of the CPR as intersessional governing body.

Thank you.